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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CYPRUS

Letter dated 2 January 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I have the honour to bring to your attention the following disturbing events, which took place in Cyprus on Saturday, 13 December 2000 and represent a gross violation of the human rights of Mr. Panicos Tsiakourmas, a Greek Cypriot.

Panicos Tsiakourmas, a peaceful family man and father of three children, while on the soil of the British Sovereign Base of Dhekelia, near the village of Pergamos, was abducted by a group of Turkish Cypriots, beaten up and imprisoned in the occupied part of Cyprus, which is under the control of the Turkish forces.

The abduction of Mr. Tsiakourmas has been strongly condemned by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and has been denounced as an illegal and terrorist act that blatantly violates his human rights. Despite the calls for the speedy and unconditional release of the abducted man, the illegal Turkish Cypriot regime has so far been refusing to heed them and instead has proceeded to press criminal charges against him.

The responsibility for this condemnable abduction of Mr. Tsiakourmas lies fully with the Government of Turkey. According to the decision of the European Court of Human Rights of 18 December 1996, Turkey bears the responsibility for the policies and actions of the illegal Turkish Cypriot regime, because of the effective military control she exercises in the occupied part of Cyprus. In that same decision, the Court labelled this illegal regime as a "subordinate local administration" of Turkey (case of Titina Loizidou v. Turkey). Thus, in the abduction of Mr. Tsiakourmas, the Government of Turkey is guilty of violation of the European Convention on Human Rights and of numerous other international instruments to which Turkey is a party.

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus would appreciate your personal intervention, Madame High Commissioner, and that of your Office, in reinforcing the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, towards achieving the speedy and unconditional release of Mr. Tsiakourmas.

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as an official document of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 9 (a), entitled "Question of human rights in Cyprus".

Signed: Alexandros N. VIKIS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative